

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS - 12/31/88

SUBJ: REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN STUDIES SPECIALISTS

REF: TAIPEI 231-C; USIA 1153-C

1. JAPANESE SPONSORS STATED INTEREST, WITH CONCURRENCE OF U.S. ADVISERS AT CULTURAL CONFERENCE IN JUNE, IN INVITING PRC TO SEND DELEGATION TO JAPANESE SPONSORED EAST ASIAN CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN STUDIES SPECIALISTS SET FOR SEPTEMBER 1976. THEY HESITATED BECAUSE OF UNCERTAINTY OF HOW BEST TO PROCEED. THEY DID NOT ISSUE INVITATION TO PRC UNTIL THIS MONTH. IN SEPTEMBER CONFERENCE WAS MENTIONED BY PLANNING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE TO PRC SCHOLARS GROUP VISITING KYOTO, WHICH RESPONDED THAT IN PRINCIPLE INVITATION WAS DESIRABLE, BUT MADE NO COMMITMENT; ON ADVICE OF FOREIGN OFFICE, CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE ADDRESSED LETTER TO PRC FOREIGN OFFICE JANUARY 7 INVITING NOMINATION OF THREE SCHOLARS TO BE CONSIDERED BY PLANNING COMMITTEE. LETTER WAS SIMILAR TO THOSE SENT MUCH EARLIER TO ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONS IN ALL EAST ASIAN PACIFIC COUNTRIES AND LISTED ALL OTHER COUNTRIES TO BE INVITED, INCLUDING TAIWAN. NO ANSWER AS YET RECEIVED VIA FOREIGN OFFICE.

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2. WE DISCUSSED WITH JAPANESE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

SEVERAL TIMES BOTH THE UNDESIRABILITY OF A TWO-CHINA CONFRONTATION WITHIN THE AMERICAN STUDIES CONFERENCE, AND THE GENERAL RECORD OF PAST NON-PARTICIPATION BY THE PRC IN MULTINATIONAL ACADEMIC MEETINGS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES SCHOLARS WHICH WERE ALSO ATTENDED BY AMERICANS. WE DID NOT ADVOCATE ONE COURSE OR THE OTHER, BUT ONLY WARNED OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT IF BOTH WERE TO COME. JAPANESE BELIEVE AS WE DO THAT PRC IS MOST UNLIKELY TO PARTICIPATE ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY SEE THAT ROC HAS ALREADY BEEN INVITED. JAPANESE ALSO BELIEVE THAT FOR REASONS OF JAPANESE DIPLOMATIC POLICY AND PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY THEIR DESIRE FOR UNIVERSALITY OF SCHOLARSHIP, THEY HAD TO MAKE GESTURE AT LEAST OF INVITING PRC SCHOLARS.

3. ALL INVITEES WILL BE DETERMINED AFTER NOMINATIONS RECEIVED FROM ALL COUNTRIES, IN CONSULTATION WITH WINKS BCICA COMMITTEE AND WITH US. IF PRC PROVIDES NAMES, INVITATIONS WILL BE SENT AT SAME TIME AS OTHER COUNTRIES. IF NOT, NO FURTHER PRC SOLICITATION PLANNED.

4. WE WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT AND TAIPEI INFORMED IF PRC DOES RESPOND. WILL WELCOME ANY DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE, ALTHOUGH WE MUST POINT OUT JAPANESE ARE SPONSORING AND RUNNING THIS CONFERENCE AND IT IS NOT UNDER OUR CONTROL. WE BELIEVE JAPANESE SCHOLARS RUNNING THIS CONFERENCE ARE QUITE REALISTIC ABOUT NATURE OF "SCHOLARSHIP" IN PRC--PROBABLY MORE REALISTIC THAN WINKS. DEPARTMENT COULD PERHAPS HELP EXPLAIN TO WINKS THE INHERENT INCOMPATIBILITY OF TWO-CHINA PARTICIPATION EVEN IN A CONFERENCE OF SCHOLAR INDIVIDUALS.

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